



2015

MAC

**Operations
Handbook**

I. INTRODUCTION

Multi-agency coordination between wildland fire protection agencies is an ongoing process in the Great Basin. The fire program managers of the various state and federal agencies involved in wildland fire protection meet regularly as the Great Basin Coordinating Group (GBCG). This group serves as a forum to review and discuss matters of mutual interest and to develop plans to ensure a coordinated approach is taken relative to wildland fire protection with the Great Basin Geographic Area.

This Operations Handbook includes procedures to guide Great Basin Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (GBMAC) activities in those situations where unusual or critical fire activity and resource mobilization requires continuous, daily interaction between agencies to ensure that decisions not covered in existing plans and guides are responsive to the priority interests of the geographic area as a whole.

The purpose of the Great Basin Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (GBMAC) Operations Handbook is to provide management direction for cooperation, standardization, and operational guidelines for fire and incident management activities in the Great Basin. The handbook helps to provide consistency and continuity between agencies represented on the Great Basin Coordinating Group.

The Great Basin Coordinating (GBCG) Group consists of one representative from the following agencies:

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	Idaho, Nevada, Utah and Arizona
Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)	Mountain Prairie, Pacific and Pacific Southwest Regions
National Park Service (NPS)	Intermountain and Pacific West Regions
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)	Western Region
Forest Service (FS)	Region Four
State Agencies	Idaho, Nevada, and Utah

MISSION

Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) provides a forum to discuss actions to be taken to ensure that an adequate number resources are available to meet anticipated needs and to allocate those resources most efficiently during periods of shortage.

The Multi-Agency Coordination forum coordinates:

- Incident prioritization
- Resource acquisition, allocation and reallocation strategy development, related to workload and capability scenarios, state or national disaster response, (e.g., National Response Framework)
- Information provided to media and agency heads, and
- Identification and resolution of issues common to all parties.

AUTHORITIES

Agency Administrators: By virtue of the executive positions they occupy in their respective agencies, have the authority to order the movement of personnel and equipment under their jurisdiction to maximize the pre-suppression and suppression capabilities of their agencies.

Fire Program Managers/Agency or Unit Duty Officers: Respective agencies within the Great Basin are authorized within constraints of available funding to manage preparedness activities and coordinate such with other agencies and to move resources between units to best serve the needs of their respective agencies.

Great Basin Geographic Area Coordination Center Manager: Through a Memorandum of Understanding that establishes the Great Basin Coordination Center (GBCC) the Center Manager has the authority to move resources across agency boundaries to meet preparedness and suppression needs of the participating agencies. This movement is limited to action specified in Great Basin Mobilization Guide, Great Basin Preparedness Plan and the National Interagency Mobilization Guide.

MAC Group Members: In most instances in the Great Basin, the federal or state level agency administrators have designated the fire program manager of their respective agencies the MAC Group member for their agency.

ORGANIZATION

The Great Basin Multi-Agency Coordination Group will consist of the voting members of the Great Basin Coordinating Group, Geographic Area Coordination Center Manager, and Great Basin MAC Coordinator. Support specialists will be requested as the situation dictates.

Trainees on the MAC are acknowledged and encouraged in MAC Coordinator and Agency Representative positions.

II. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Agency Administrator:

- Delegates Agency Representative and issues written delegation of authority.
- Supports MAC Group decisions.

MAC Group Members:

- Establishes incident priorities for the Great Basin Coordinating Group member agencies.
- Establishes priorities for allocation of resources between incidents within the geographic area.
- Re-allocates resources between incidents when necessary.
- Develops procedures to implement GB and National MAC decisions.

- Identifies and resolves MAC issues common to all parties.
- Develops geographic area strategies and contingency plans.
- Initiates special actions, strategy and contingency plans to alleviate resource shortages to meet anticipated demands.
- Ensure agency situation status is current and information is correct.
- Keeps agency administrators informed of the situation and of MAC decisions.
- Maintains a dialogue with the Incident Unit Agency Administrators and Fire Managers.
- Identifies fiscal issues and concerns, coordinates severity requests, pre-positioning activities, etc.
- Provides information and perspective to agencies wishing to proceed with prescribed fire applications as indicated on the go/no go checklist.
- Determines need and support Wildland Fire and Aviation Safety Teams (FAST) and Aviation Safety Assistance Teams (ASAT).
- Determines need for Staging Areas/Mobilization Centers and possible locations.
- Coordinates activation of a Joint Information Center (JIC), Public Affairs and other media support.

MAC Group Coordinator (MCCO)

Initially, the Center Manager of the GACC carries out the duties of the MAC Coordinator. As the workload increases (usually Preparedness Level 3 and higher) the GACC Manager should make the recommendation to the GBCG to activate the MAC Group. At that point, a qualified MAC Coordinator and support staff will be assigned to relieve the Center Manager of this workload.

A. MAC Group Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

The Great Basin Multi-Agency Coordinating Group Coordinator (MAC Coordinator) is delegated authority by the Chair, of the Great Basin Coordinating Group (see Appendix 1). The Great Basin MAC Coordinator is delegated the same authorities as the MAC Group Members and may act on each agencies behalf. The Great Basin MAC Coordinator's roles and responsibilities also include:

- Establishes, with MAC Group concurrence, a daily schedule for meetings and conference calls.
- Facilitates issues needing MAC Group attention.
- Obtains appropriate intelligence information necessary to support MAC activities.
- Acquires and supervises MAC Support Specialists, Administrative and IT staffs to support MAC Group activities.
- Ensures adequate subject matter expertise is available to support MAC activities.
- Facilitates MAC Group meetings.
- Documents MAC decisions.
- Distributes MAC decisions.

- Assembles the record of MAC decisions and activities.
- Serves as the focal point of contact with the NMAC Coordinator and/or NMAC Liaison to the Great Basin.
- MAC Coordinator may decide due to workload to assign a Deputy MAC Coordinator.
- Facilitates daily conference calls with IC's and AC's.
- Coordinates FAST/ASAT responses and collects daily reports.

B. MAC Group Coordinator Qualifications

Recommended: Attendance of the Great Basin MAC Refresher or workshop.

Required Training and Experience: In-depth knowledge of the national dispatch/coordination system, ICS, NIMS, incident management protocols, management and allocation of national resources, agency fire management policies, decision support tools and products, ICS-209, WFDSS, etc. Familiar with protocols based on National and Area Preparedness Levels.

MAC Support - Administration

A. Administrative Assistant Roles and Responsibilities

- Ensures telephone and computer access, work stations, meeting space, and access to FAX, copier, and office supplies.
- Develops, updates, and maintains numerous MAC email lists for dissemination of information.
- Reserves conference call times for needed briefings, and provides schedule and access information to all participants.
- Prepares filing system to organize and retain all records related to MAC Support activities.
- Files all MAC Support materials to document activity and decisions made by the group.
- Provides telephone coverage, note-taking duties, correspondence support, and other clerical duties as requested.
- Makes key documents available for posting to the MAC web site.
- When the MAC Support group is disbanded, consolidates all records material for permanent retention.

B. Administrative Assistant Experience and Training:

Recommended: Attendance of D-110 Expanded Dispatch Recorder or D-310 Support Dispatcher course. Has purchase card authority.

Required: Knowledge of developing and maintaining, email lists, meeting and conference call note taking ability, use of spreadsheets such as Excel, computer skills and strong clerical capability.

MAC Support – Aviation

A. MAC Aviation Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

- Tracks the status of critical aviation resources as defined by MAC.
- Provides recommendations for mobilization, allocation, reallocation, and release of aviation resources.
- Establishes and maintains coordination with the MAC Coordinator, GACC Manager, Agency Operations Coordinators and Aviation Coordinators.
- Establishes and maintains coordination with Agency, National, Regional/Area, Unit and Incident aviation managers with the Great Basin, NICC/NMAC and sub-geographic area MAC Groups.
- Assists with the daily prioritization of Great Basin incidents.
- Recommend changes in flight duty schedules.
- Provides assistance with aviation related issues.
- Facilitates MAC Aviation conference calls.
- Coordinates for FAST, ASAT and other technical experts when assigned in the Great Basin. Recommends mobilization of FAST and ASAT based on current and expected situation.
- When requested, assists with the resolution of aviation related issues.

B. Aviation Coordinator Experience and Training:

Recommended: Air Operations Branch Director.

Required: Experience as an agency aviation program manager. In-depth knowledge of the dispatch/coordination system, management of national aviation resources, and aviation management strategies based on National and Geographic Area Preparedness levels. Also recommend that the individual as completed the Great Basin MAC Training.

MAC Support – Crew Coordinator

A. MAC Crew Coordinator Roles and Responsibilities

- Tracks the status of Type 1, Type 2 and Type 2 IA crews as defined by MAC.
- Provides recommendations for mobilization, allocation, reallocation, and release of crews.
- Establishes and maintains coordination with the MAC Coordinator, GACC Managers, Operations Coordinators and GACC Crew Coordinators.
- Establishes and maintains coordination with National, Regional/Area, Unit and Incident crews.
- Monitors work/rest, crew days off, R&R policies and validates number of days worked.
- Monitors and validates mission related tasks while assigned to incident and or/pre-positioning.

- Prepares spreadsheets and other reports to assist in crew prioritization and allocation.
- Assists with the daily prioritization of Great Basin incidents.
- Coordinates with Interagency Resource Representatives (IARR's).
- Provides assistance with other crew related issues.
- Participates in MAC Conference Calls.

B. Crew Coordinator Experience and Training:

Recommended: Hotshot Superintendent, Captain or Foreman.

Required: Experience as in Interagency Hotshot Superintendent. Knowledge of the dispatch/coordination system, management of national resources, and crew allocation strategies based on National and Geographic Area Preparedness levels. Also recommend that the individual has completed the Great Basin MAC Training.

MAC Support – Operations

A. MAC Operations Roles and Responsibilities

- Tracks the status of Incident Management Teams and the Great Basin's initial attack capability as defined by the MAC.
- Works with the GBCC Coordinator on Duty, Operations Coordinators and IMT Operations section to assure that available resources are assigned according to critical needs.
- Provides recommendations for mobilization, allocation, reallocation, and release of ground operations resources.
- Assist with the daily prioritization of Great Basin incidents.
- Recommends mobilization of FAST, ASAT or other technical experts based on the current or expected situation.
- Functions as the MAC point of contact and supervisor for GB MAC Surge Capacity Task Forces and other mission specific requests.
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MAC Support – Intelligence/Planning

A. MAC Intelligence/Planning Roles and Responsibilities

- Collects the Incident Prioritization Worksheets (IPW), ICS 209's, and any additional information from the incidents needed for prioritization.
- Assembles intelligence information to support MAC activities such as:
 - Resource Status (ICS-209, ROSS reports, etc.)
 - Outstanding Resource Orders
 - Projected needs by incident.
- Maintains and inputs incident information into the database for incident prioritization.

- Works with the IMT Planning Section, Great Basin Coordination Center Intelligence section and sub-geographic MAC on information clarification and/or additional information needs.
- Tracks critical needs of each incident and displays daily.
- Maintains daily information on MAC/Geographic Area and National incident priorities, daily schedules, and conference calls.
- Collect documentation for and maintains the MAC documentation package.
- Assists with daily prioritization of Great Basin incidents.
- Assess and recommends additional staffing, changes to procedures, and/or data needs to provide for efficient, accurate and timely information for decision making.
- As needed, contacts IMT's for clarification and/or updates on fire status and needs.
- As requested analyzes WFDSS reports for assumptions about resource availability and determines if the objectives/strategy are in line with resources needed to accomplish the mission.
- Establishes and maintains a tracking process for all Incident Management Teams assigned in the Geographic Area and other critical resources as necessary.

B. MAC Intelligence/Planning Experience and Training

Recommended: Intelligence Specialist, Planning Section Chief, Situation Unit Leader

Required: Experience in use of FamWeb applications, data base development and management, Excel Spreadsheets, WFDSS, ICS-209, Situation Reports, ROSS/Cognos reports. Knowledge of the dispatch/coordination system, management of national resources, and allocation strategies based on National and Geographic Area Preparedness levels. Also recommend that the individual has completed the Great Basin MAC Training.

MAC Support – Decision Support

Primary Expectations Include:

- Decision Analysis Support
 - Provide decision analysis information for emerging incidents in a relatively short time frame as requested by the Geographic Area MAC Group and/or Unit or Regional personnel.
 - Provide fire behavior analyses for on-going priority fires as needed.
 - Support smoke modeling as requested.
 - Provide more detailed or in-depth analyses in support of FBAN/LTANs on active incidents.
- Decision Documentation Support
 - Provide assistance with the application of analysis information to decision making and documentation in WFDSS, as requested by field users.

- Aid in review of decision content in WFDSS as requested, and provide feedback to reviewer/approver.
- Information Dissemination
 - Develop area-wide fire environment informational products for use to brief incoming IMTs or crews, as needed, including, but not limited to: fuel moisture conditions and trends; fire behavior projections; smoke dispersal trends.
 - Provide information to the field about the DSC, information about potential products, and contact information.
 - Provide training opportunities to within-area and out-of-area resources where feasible.
- Situation Monitoring
 - Provide assistance to all Agencies as requested.
 - Track documentation requirements in WFDSS for fires being supported, including decision approvals, periodic assessment due dates, etc.

MAC Support – Safety

A. MAC Safety and Risk Management Specialist Roles and Responsibilities

- Understands and can communicate Agency safety principles and policies in an interagency context.
- Monitors the overall safety situation for the geographic area.
- Facilitates the daily Incident Safety Officer Conference Call.
- Maintains contacts with Incident Safety Officers; may provide briefings/briefing materials to update incoming IMTs on safety issues and policies in the Great Basin
- Collects safety-related data from incidents/units and maintains a running trend analysis on accidents, injuries, fatalities, and issues.
- May lead or sponsor field trips to incidents/units as necessary and participate in Fire and Aviation Safety and Assistance (FAST) Teams.
- Maintains daily contact with Great Basin MAC Coordinator and Aviation/Operations Specialists for coordination and situational awareness; reports out as during Great Basin MAC briefings/conference calls.
- Coordinates with Agency Fire Safety Specialists

B. MAC Intelligence/Planning Experience and Training

Recommended: Experience in agency safety and risk management programs, policies and procedures.

Required: Type 1 or Type 2 Safety Officer on an Incident Management Team.

GACC Center Manager:

- Implements Great Basin and National MAC decisions.
- Recommends issues needing MAC action.
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Local Administrator or Units with Incidents:

- Provides direct management and oversight of suppression activities and achievement of agency direction.
- Transmits Delegation of Authority and WFDSS to Great Basin MAC upon approval.
- Monitors MAC decisions and asks for reconsideration action through their respective agency MAC representative if there is concern over MAC's interpretation of fact relative to the status or needs of the incident.
- Maintains dialog with their respective MAC Group representative/member.

Local Dispatch Centers and Incident Expanded Dispatch Organization or Local Ordering Points:

- Facilitates flow of intelligence information needed to support MAC activities.
- Facilitates flow of MAC decisions to field units Incident Management Teams, Area Commands and Sub-Geographic Area MAC's as appropriate.
- Implements actions associated with MAC decisions as may be appropriate to the dispatch system.

Incident Management Teams & Area Commands:

- Provides accurate information relative to incident status, threats and projections of needs as requested to support MAC activities.
- Implements actions associated with MAC decisions as may be appropriate to the Incident Management Team, Area Command.
- Submit a Great Basin Incident Prioritization Summary (IPS).
- Participate on daily IC conference calls.

Sub-Geographic Area MAC's:

- Prioritize incidents.
- Ensure agency resource situation is current.
- Determine specific agency resource requirements.
- Determine agency resource availability.
- Allocate resources to incidents based upon established criteria.
- Anticipate future resource needs.
- Communicate and/or implement MAC decisions.
- Review need for other agencies involvement in the Sub-Geo Area MAC.
- Provides accurate information relative to incident status, threats and projections of needs as requested by Great Basin MAC.

National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC):

The National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) consists of one representative from the following agencies:

1. National Association of State Foresters (NASF)
2. USDA Forest Service (USFS)
3. National Park Service (NPS)

4. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)* Representative to GBMAC
5. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)
6. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
7. Federal Emergency Management Agency (United States Fire Administration (FEMA-USFA)

NMAC has written delegated authority from their respective agency heads to represent their agency on all matters related to wildland fire operations. This includes membership on the NMAC, determining national priorities, and allocating/reallocating resources.

Responsibilities include:

- Determine and set National priorities.
- Direct, control, allocate or reallocate resources among or between Geographic Areas to meet NMAC priorities.
- Provide policy modification and direction for procedures, standards, and methods.
- Coordinate information and situation assessments between agencies and publics.
- The NMAC will initiate conference calls with the GBMAC's as the situation warrants.
- The NMAC requires information from the GBMAC to prioritize and allocate resources in accordance with the National Strategy. GBMAC will be asked to provide a description of the process being utilized to establish priorities. Additionally, GBMAC should provide an assessment of the current overall situation which includes an analysis of whether the situation should improve or deteriorate of the next seven days. Descriptions of risks associated with specific incidents that may pose a threat to communities or critical infrastructure is paramount. GBMAC will submit information and priority matrix to NICC via e-mail to NICC_Intell@nifc.blm.gov.
- When situations warrant, NMAC will require rationale and information for assignment of Type 1 Incident Management Teams and Area Command teams.
- At National Preparedness Levels 4 and 5, list specific resources required to accomplish priority incident objectives and describe whether those needs can be met from within the Geographic Area or not.

The NMAC will provide a liaison to the GBMAC to coordinate issues and concerns.

General Operating Procedures

Great Basin MAC Group Activation

At Great Basin Preparedness Level 3, the Great Basin Coordinating Group and Geographic Area Coordination Center Managers will discuss and consider the need to activate the MAC Group. The decision to activate the MAC Group will be based on the number of large/complex/Incident Management Team (IMT) incidents, prescribed burns scheduled, predicted weather, percentage of area crews and initial attack resources committed, and the level of competition for

resources between units and/or Geographic Areas or national incidents and activity.

Great Basin MAC Group Meetings

Official GBMAC Meetings will be conducted either in-person or via conference call. The choice of meeting method will be determined by a consensus of GBMAC members.

Conference Calls

The Great Basin MAC has a scheduled conference call at 1000 MDT to exchange intelligence information and establish Geographic Area priorities. The GBMAC Coordinator will facilitate the GBMAC Call. If a dedicated MAC Coordinator is not assigned, the GBCG Chair will facilitate the call. The call time may be adjusted based on activity or to coordinate with the NMAC. The purpose of these calls is to:

- Receive a timely update on incident activity and resource status.
- Obtain Predictive Services briefings and outlooks.
- Outline potential resource needs.
- Discuss and establish geographic area incident and resource allocation priorities.
- Identify and resolve concerns and problems.
- Discuss Incident Management Team issues (extensions, rotations, etc.)

Conference call participants will be the GBMAC members and spokespersons for the Great Basin Coordinating Group.

In-Person Meetings

The GBMAC may decide to hold an in-person meeting rather than conference calls depending upon activity and issues that need to be addressed.

Great Basin MAC Plan Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Delegation of Authority, MAC Coordinator
- Appendix 2 - Area Command Briefing Paper
- Appendix 3 - MAC Daily Schedule
- Appendix 4 - MAC Conference Call Agenda
- Appendix 5 - Incident Priority Worksheet (IPW)
- Appendix 6 - Incident Priority Worksheet Instructions
- Appendix 7 - Incident Commander Conference Call Agenda
- Appendix 8 - Great Basin MAC Incident Priority Spreadsheet (excel)
- Appendix 9 - Great Basin MAC Decision Document
- Appendix 10 - Delegation of Authority, Great Basin MAC Aviation Coordinator
- Appendix 11 - MAC Aviation Conference Call Template
- Appendix 12 - MAC Aviation Re-Assignment – Release Prioritization
- Appendix 13 - Delegation of Authority, ASAT Team Leader
- Appendix 14 - Delegation of Authority, FAS Team Leader
- Appendix 15 - Decision Support Center Expectations